

System Configuration Team Meeting Notes

April 20, 2006

1. Greetings and Introductions.

Bill Hevlin chaired the April 20 SCT meeting, held at NOAA Fisheries' Portland offices. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Kathy Ceballos at 503-230-5420.

2. Update on FY'06 CRFM Budget.

Randy Chong noted that Advanced American Constructors has been awarded the contract to construct the Lower Monumental RSW; they will have approximately 11 months to complete the project. The Lower Monumental RSW is, as the SCT is aware, scheduled to be operational by the spring of 2007. The contract amount is just over \$14.75 million, all of which will come out of the FY'06 CRFM budget. That's quite a bit higher than the previous RSW contracts, Chong said, primarily because of the need to build a foundation for the structure.

With that, said Kranda, the total estimate for Lower Monumental is about \$18 million. That meant we had to come up with about \$3 million in cuts to the FY'06 program, he said. The Corps has done a first cut at that, taking \$1 million out of The Dalles BGS, now deferred. Another \$1 million was found through scrubbing various Portland District items, including the John Day biological studies line-item, which was reduced by \$600,000. As of right now, however, the Portland District program is going forward essentially as planned, Kranda said.

Chong said that, in Walla Walla District, the Corps had planned to go to design on the repair of the Little Goose dewatering structure; that project has now been deferred to next year. We were going to do more work on the systemwide stilling basin erosion study; again, that has been deferred. The Lower Granite juvenile facility upgrade is being cut back slightly, with some of the work shifted to next year, he said. The big one is the temporary spillway weir at McNary this fall, he said; we may not be able to find enough money to get that constructed this summer, so that we can test it this fall. We're trying to find enough money to keep that on the plate, Chong said, but at this point, we just don't know. The cost of the temporary weir line-item is about \$2 million, Kranda added.

Little Goose remains on track with the last decision made at IT, said Kranda. The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to the FY'06 CRFM measures worksheet, with Kranda highlighting those items whose funding levels have changed. The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to this issue, touching in particular on the temporary weir test at McNary and the John Day north shore improvements, among other line-items. Gary Fredricks said that, in NOAA's view improving the John Day north shore fish ladder should be prioritized higher than it is, currently; that project has been deferred for a number of years, and this year's T1 outage has highlighted the need for an alternative route of passage at that project. There was general SCT agreement that the Corps should attempt to do both the temporary weir test and the John Day north shore improvements this year, if at all possible. We're going to try, Kranda said. Jim Ruff and Russ Kiefer both expressed their organizations' support for Fredricks' statement, urging the Corps to fund both line-items if possible. Fodrea said BPA feels the alternative spillway weir should be prioritized higher than the John Day north shore improvements. Rick Kruger and Tom Lorz said that ODFW and CRITFC, respectively, feel the John Day ladder improvements should be the higher priority.

3. FY'07 CRFM Program Prioritization.

The discussion then moved on to the FY'07 CRFM prioritization process. Hevlin distributed the revised SCT criteria and guidelines for prioritization of the FY'07 CRFM program, modified to reflect the discussion at last month's SCT meeting, as well as the most recent version of the FY'07 CRFM measures worksheet, dated April 20.

Hevlin said it was his hope that SCT would be close to a final draft of the criteria and guidelines document at today's meeting. The group briefly reviewed this document, offering a few clarifying questions and comments. Comments focused on fully-funded vs. continuing contracts, and included guidelines which linked projects jointly executed by the CRFM and the NPCC program and an emphasis on cost effectiveness. Also, the scoring system was revised by adding a "zero – do not fund" category, and, overall, the need for greater flexibility in the criteria.

It was agreed that the caucuses will score each line-item based on a 0-5 scale, with 5 being the highest priority and zero being "do not fund." The group then discussed the need to tie the SCT's criteria and prioritization process to the specific authorities the group is charged to uphold under CRFM and other programs, because of the need to explain its actions to the Council and other entities. It was agreed that the role and responsibilities of the SCT would be included in the process narrative document which precedes the criteria. Ruff suggested that the group also add "suggested" priority level at the top of the spreadsheet.

The SCT worked its way through the criteria, offering a variety of clarifying comments and questions, with Silverberg using the white board to note the specific changes made to the criteria. Ultimately, Silverberg said she will revise the criteria to reflect today's discussion, and will provide them to Hevlin prior to the next SCT meeting.

Kranda then went through the latest FY07 CRFM spreadsheet, updating the group on the most recent changes to funding levels and scope of work on various line-items. He said he will provide a further update at the next SCT meeting, once workplans are available. Hevlin said the caucus meetings will be deferred until after there is agreement on a final criteria document and the FY07 workplans are received, which will likely occur at the May SCT meeting.

4. Coordination and Planning of WQT/SCT Visit and Meetings, May 17-18 at the Lower Snake and McNary Projects.

The group briefly discussed the logistics of the upcoming WQT/SCT site visits to the Lower Snake projects and McNary Dam, scheduled for May 17-18. Hevlin said all interested parties are invited to join the tour, and asked anyone who needs transportation to contact him or Mark Schneider directly.

5. FFDRWG and SRWG Updates and Future Meetings.

The Corps distributed a schedule of upcoming SRWG meetings to discuss FY'07 planning; the next Walla Walla District meeting was scheduled for May 4-5. The next Portland District FFDRWG meeting was set for May 31. The transportation subgroup is meeting on May 19.

6. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for May 18 at McNary Dam. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.